

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 011286
ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 SCA-01 ISO-00 L-03 SSO-00 H-01 DHA-02 SCS-03
SNM-02 SS-15 /038 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/AND/B - MR. LEVINE:LEE
APPROVED BY ARA - WHLUERS
ARA/AND - FJDEVINE
SCA - MR. HENNEMEYER
ARA - GLISTER
SCA - FSTEVENS (INFO
L - LFIELDS

-----180451Z 074194 /12

O 180431Z JAN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ IMMEDIATE

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STADIS/////////
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, BL

SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA

REF: STATE 007738

1. FOLLOWING THE DRAFTING OF THE GUIDANCE IN REFTTEL, ON TWO OCCASIONS LAST WEEK A DELEGATION OF PARENTS OF US CITIZEN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA, ACCOMPANIED BY CONGRESSIONAL STAFF AIDES AND OTHER INTERESTED OBSERVERS, MET IN THE DEPARTMENT WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ARA, L, S/NM SCA AND DEA. THE OBJECT OF THE MEETINGS WAS TO ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 STATE 011286

SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF WHAT THE PARENTS SEE AS THE UNJUST IMPRISONMENT AND LACK OF LEGAL PROCESS OF THEIR CHILDREN. IN AN EMOTIONAL ATMOSPHERE, THE PARENTS VENTED THEIR DISSATISFACTION AT EFFORTS OF US GOVERNMENT TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN.

2. RECENT CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST, PRESS COMMENT, AND THE

PARENTS' MILITANCE IS ESCALATING THIS DIFFICULT CONSULAR PROBLEM INTO A POLICY MATTER. ON JANUARY 11, CONGRESSMAN AMBRO OF NEW YORK INTRODUCED INTO THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD THE JANUARY 1 JACK ANDERSON COLUMN ON THE PRISONERS. IN HIS PERSONAL REMARKS ON THE BOLIVIAN SITUATION, AMBRO

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ALLEGED THAT BOLIVIA IS COOPERATING WITH US DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS IN ORDER TO CONTINUE RECEIVING FOREIGN AID FUNDS, AND CONTENDED THAT THE ARREST OF THE PRESENT PRISONER POPULATION WAS DONE "TO ESTABLISH A RECORD" OF COOPERATIVE EFFORTS WITH THE US.

3. IN ORDER TO RESPOND BEST IN PROVIDING CONSULAR SERVICES ANSWERS TO CONGRESS, AND TO THE POLICY PROBLEM, DEPARTMENT REQUIRES MUCH MORE DETAILED AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION ON THESE CASES. WE REALIZE THAT EMBASSY CONSULAR STAFFING IS EXTREMELY TIGHT AND DOES NOT PERMIT THE IN-DEPTH STUDY THAT IS NOW NECESSARY. THEREFORE, DEPARTMENT PROPOSES TO SEND, ASAP, A TEAM COMPRISED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF ARA, L, AND SCS TO LA PAZ TO INVESTIGATE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE EMBASSY STAFF, THE PHYSICAL AND LEGAL SITUATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL US CITIZEN PRISONER IN A BOLIVIAN JAIL.

4. WE PRESENTED THIS IDEA TO THE PARENTS AT THE SECOND MEETING. AFTER A BRIEF CAUCUS, THEY SEEMED TO BE PLEASED BUT SET FIVE CONDITIONS THAT THEY FELT WERE NECESSARY FOR THE TEAM TO SUCCEED. THEY HAVE ASKED THAT WE: (1) IN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 011286

CLUE ON THE TEAM A STAFF MEMBER FROM THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS ABUSE AND CONTROL (2) INTERVIEW EACH US PRISONER WITHOUT THE PRESENCE OF ANY EMBASSY PERSONNEL, (3) INCLUDE ON THE TEAM, IF POSSIBLE, A MEMBER OF THE PARENTS DELEGATION (4) HAVE THE RESULTS OF THE TEAM VISIT AVAILABLE TO PRESENT TO THE PARENTS ON FEBRUARY 7 WHEN THEY PLAN TO MEET AND (5) INCLUDE LOU FIELDS AS A MEMBER. WE HAD ALREADY PLANNED TO BEGIN THE TRIP BEFORE FEBRUARY 1, AND TO INCLUDE LOU FIELDS THUS SATISFYING POINTS (4) AND (5). WE ARE TAKING THE OTHER POINTS AS SUGGESTIONS ALTHOUGH WE HAVE PROBLEMS ESPECIALLY WITH NO. (2).

5. I HOPE I HAVE DESCRIBED THE FOREGOING IN SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF THE KINDS OF PRESSURE WE FACE ON THIS ISSUE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE TEAM WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE US WITH SUFFICIENT DETAIL BETTER TO ASSIST US CITIZEN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA AND TO ANSWER ALLEGATIONS OF WHATEVER TYPE.

6. THE PARENTS THEMSELVES WILL, IN THE MEANTIME, PURSUE THEIR DIRECT CONTACTS WITH BOLIVIAN AMBASSADOR CRESPO, WHO HAS STATED THAT HIS DOOR IS OPEN TO THEM AT ANY TIME. THE PARENTS DELEGATION HAS TOLD US THAT IT PLANS TO EXPLORE WITH AMBASSADOR CRESPO THE CONCEPT OF A UNILATERAL GOB DECISION TO DEPORT ALL OF THE PRISONERS TO THE US.

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7. AS A FINAL POINT, WE ARE CONSIDERING ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING GROUP OR TASK FORCE IN THE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF THE ENTIRE PRISONER SITUATION THERE AND ELSEWHERE. THIS GROUP PROBABLY WILL COME INTO EXISTENCE OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, AS WE PLAN FOR THE VISIT TO LA PAZ. I WILL SEND YOU MORE INFORMATION AS TO THE EXACT COMPOSITION OF THE TEAM AND ITS DATE OF ARRIVAL IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 STATE 011286

LA PAZ.

8. I WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR CONCURRENCE IN THE DESPATCH OF A TEAM TO LA PAZ WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS FOR A 3-4 DAY VISIT THAT WOULD INCLUDE SANTA CRUZ AND OTHER CITIES WHERE AMERICAN CITIZENS ARE IMPRISONED. I WOULD ALSO LIKE YOUR VIEWS ON HOW BEST TO HANDLE THE VISIT WITHIN THE GOB. BOB PACE, WHO HAS HANDLED THIS MATTER ADMIRABLY, WILL BE THE ARA REPRESENTATIVE AND I HOPE LOU FIELDS WILL GO FROM L. KISSINGER

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